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Pork production expected to continue record pace

Benjamin Herrold Nov 6, 2019 Updated Nov 7, 2019



File photo

U.S. pork production is on a record pace this year, and the Livestock Marketing Information Center is expecting that trend to continue.

“The LMIC is forecasting 2019 pork production at 27.6 billion pounds, up 4.7% over 2018,” the center said in a recent analysis. “Much of the growth is attributed to the impressive efficiency gains in pigs per litter, which was reported at 11.11 from the latest Sept. 1 USDA NASS Hogs and Pigs report.”

The LMIC said trends in sows farrowing could drive even more increased production.

“The number of sows farrowing has remained steady at about 6.4 million head on a quarterly basis,” the center said.

“Looking into 2020 and 2021, sow farrowings and productivity are expected to increase. Pork production is forecast to continue on a record pace for 2020 and 2021, reaching 28.6 (up 3.8%) and 29.3 billion pounds (up 2.3%), respectively.”

A key for the industry will be what producers are able to do with the increased production, in particular exports.

“Much of the current questions surrounding U.S. pork markets pertain to growing foreign demand for U.S. pork products,” the LMIC said.

“Weekly USDA Foreign Agricultural Service export data has recently led to more noise in the market, but there is still the signal of global shortage of pork supplies in the market due to African swine fever. Official monthly USDA pork export data through August is reporting 3.3% growth over the last year.”

Pork exports are also expected to increase.

“The LMIC is forecasting 2019 pork exports at 6.4 billion pounds (up 9.2%) with large fourth quarter shipments to Asian markets expected to materialize,” the center said. “For 2020 and 2021, exports are forecast at 7.0 and 7.2 billion pounds, respectively. Exports are expected to continue accounting for upwards of 25% of total U.S. pork production.”

Benjamin Herrold

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